

Response to Questions on the FY 2006 Advertised Budget Plan

Request By: Supervisor Kauffman

Question: Please outline programs and costs associated with senior-related services.

Response: Comprehensively identifying all costs of services to the senior population is very difficult. While it is relatively simple to determine the cost of those services specifically targeted to the senior population (e.g., adult protective and home-based care services provided by the Department of Family Services), the County also provides services to the general population that, although not specifically designed for seniors, enhance their general standard of living (e.g., public safety services). Given the lack of data regarding the senior population's utilization rate of general County services, the cost of providing general County services to seniors can only be estimated. Therefore, where possible, this analysis reflects the gross cost, revenue offset, and net cost to the County for services targeted specifically to seniors.

FY 2005 program and cost data on the type and scope of services targeted specifically to seniors were identified (see attached matrix). It should be noted that this analysis reflects only those services included in General Fund, General Fund Supported, and Other Funds, and does not include services supported by non-appropriated funds, such as rent relief provided through Fund 941, Fairfax County Rental Program. Furthermore, this analysis reflects only services and costs that are included in the FY 2005 Adopted Budget Plan. Likewise, this analysis does not include capital projects funded in prior years (neither those that specifically serve seniors, such as Senior Centers or Adult Day Health Care facilities, nor those designed to serve the general population, such as libraries and police stations).

The cost of services to seniors included in the FY 2005 Adopted Budget Plan totals \$51,017,788, offset by revenues of \$8,100,271, for a net cost to the County of \$42,917,517. It should be noted that expenditures of \$51.0 million is approximately 1.9 percent of FY 2005 Adopted Budget Plan General Fund Disbursements of \$2.73 billion. Excluding the General Fund Transfer to Fairfax County Public Schools of \$1.32 billion, \$51.0 million is approximately 3.6 percent of remaining General Fund Disbursements. As noted earlier, these figures are not reflective of the cost of all services provided to seniors, only those services specifically designed for seniors or where participation by seniors has been tracked or can be reasonably estimated. For comparison purposes, please consider that as of 2003, persons over age 55 comprised approximately 19.9 percent of the total Fairfax County population.

Some examples of the services the County offers specifically to seniors include Real Estate Tax Relief, transportation, long-term care, and recreation. Real Estate Tax Relief, for instance, is provided to those adults 65-years-old and older or those who are disabled on a graduated scale depending on the level of income and assets held. In FY 2004, there were nearly 5,500 persons participating in the program. Based on the FY 2005 Adopted Budget Plan, providing this tax relief will cost the County \$19.7 million in forgone real estate tax revenue. Mobility is a considerable challenge for many seniors. In response, the County offers a variety of transportation options, including FASTRAN services to

and from one's residence to a County Senior or Adult Day Health Care Center and the Seniors On The Go taxi cab voucher program, to help seniors specifically. These two programs have a net cost to the County of \$2.9 million a year. Long term care services provide case management and home-based care, such as bathing services, to adults over the age of 60 and those with disabilities with the goal of maximizing independence. The County will spend approximately \$6.5 million on long term care services in FY 2005. This cost is partially offset by revenues such as grant money and client fees, resulting in a net cost of \$5.1 million. Additionally, the County operates 13 senior centers throughout the County that provide lifelong learning and recreation opportunities to seniors in areas such as fitness, computers, and art. The operation of these centers costs approximately \$1.4 million per year, based on the FY 2005 Adopted Budget Plan.

It should be noted that while the County provides a variety of services specifically targeted to seniors, there are many other general County services that benefit the senior population. Police and fire services, which represent approximately 10 percent of the County's General Fund Disbursements, are but two examples. Determining how much of the budget for programs which serve the entire population goes towards serving the senior population is extremely difficult as there is little if any data on utilization of these services by demographic group.